

Sounding the Text: Listening to Gender in Mediterranean Culture in French

by

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For my sisters,
Sara, Katie, and Beth

Dedicated to the memory of Paul Vieille (1922 - 2010):
Founder of *Peuples Méditerranéens*, feminist, humanitarian, friend

Acknowledgments

Part of my interest in listening stems from a concern that Hélène Cixous puts forth in the essay “The Laugh of the Medusa,” which was one of the first works that inspired me to take up serious study of French: when we are not heard, we fall silent out of fear that we will not be taken seriously or believed. I consider myself incredibly fortunate to have so many mentors, colleagues, friends, and family members who have been such careful listeners, regarding this dissertation and far beyond.

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In many ways, George Hoffmann has served as a ghost member on this committee. It was in his seminar on Marguerite de Navarre’s *Heptaméron* in fall 2005 that I began to think about the interplay of silence and image in literary representations of sexual violence, and what this interplay might articulate. These ideas took further shape as I worked on and then presented the conference paper for the 16th century panel to which George invited me to

contribute at the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference in spring 2007. When I was in the thick of drafting my dissertation in 2009-2010, he invited me to join his writing group, and proved furthermore a most thoughtful interlocutor who helped me push my ideas in new directions. George, thank you for your enthusiasm and support for my work over the years. May our discussions about research, writing, and, of course, music, long endure.

If you had asked me at age 18 what my plans for the future were, I would have told you that I planned on continuing to play bass in a band, to work in a bookstore, and to get some fiction published. I had chalked up high school as one of the most wretched experiences of my life, and I was sure there was no way I would ever want to return to anything resembling a scholarly setting. In the following years when I was active as a recording and touring musician, feeling somewhat isolated in the back of the club with Andrea Dworkin tracts and Flannery O'Connor stories, I began to wonder in fits and starts if maybe college wouldn't be so bad after all. I enrolled at age 22 to work toward a degree in creative writing at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and there I met two professors who made me realize that studying literature could be as subversive, intense, and rewarding as strapping on my bass and taking the stage.

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The following organizations and artists graciously permitted me to use the following images in my dissertation. The poster from La Grande Noubia (page 109) is used with permission from La Cité de la Musique and photographer Valerie Belin. “Beirut: 19 July 06 2.10 AM” (page 198) and “Recording Session: Mazen Kerbaj (Trumpet) vs. The State of Israel (Bombs)” (page 204) are used with permission from Mazen Kerbaj.

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